Benjamin Leo

Department of Political Science, University of Kentucky

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**EDUCATION**

2021-Present **University of Kentucky**

Master of Arts in Political Science

*Major*: International Relations *Minor*: Comparative Politics

Ph.D. Candidate in Political Science

*Major*: International Relations *Minor*: Comparative Politics

2018-2021 **University of Cincinnati**

Bachelor of Arts, Majors in Political Science and International Affairs

Summa Cum Laude

**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

International Relations, Pro-Government Militias, Civil Wars, Coups.

**WORKING PAPERS**

Leo, Benjamin. "Pro-Government Militias and Protest Dynamics: Examining the Relationship Between State-Backed Forces and Civil Unrest"

Leo, Benjamin. “Coup Calculus: PGMs and the Risk of Military Takeovers”

Benjamin Leo. Militias & Mayhem: Pro-Government Militias and the Onset of Civil Conflict

Abebe, B., Everett, M., Findley, M., Leo, B. "Uncertain Times: Coups and Women's Perceptions of Security"

**PRESENTATIONS AT ACADEMIC CONFERENCES**

2021-Present Cryptocurrencies and Civil Conflict; How Anti-State Actors are Turning Bitcoin into Bullets.

*-Kentucky Political Science Association 2022*

*-ISA Midwest 2023*

Militias & Mayhem: Pro-Government Militias and the Onset of Civil Conflict

*-Kentucky Political Science Association 2024*

*-ISA Midwest 2024*

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2021-Present **University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY Teaching Assistant for the Department of Political Science**

Teaching Assistant

Introduction to International Relations (Fall 2021, Spring 2024)

Introduction to American Politics (Spring 2022)

WilDCats at the Capitol & KLIP Internship Program (Fall 2022)

Introduction to Comparative Politics (Spring 2023)

Political Institution (Spring 24)

European Politics (Spring 24)

Primary Instructor

Introduction to American Politics (Summer 2022)

Introduction to Political Analysis (Summer 2023)

Model United Nations (Fall 2023)

Introduction to International Relations (Winter 2023/24)

Sub-State Conflict (Fall 24)

Intro to Comparative Politics (Spring 2025)

**Published & Forthcoming Work**

Leo, B. (2023). Cryptocurrencies and Contentious Politics. In S. B. Edwards III & J. R. Masterson (Eds.), *Government Response to Disruptive Innovation: Perspectives and Examinations*. IGI Global.

Thyne, C., Powell, J., & Leo, B. (2019, October 30). [Coup research](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Foxfordre.com%2Finternationalstudies%2Fview%2F10.1093%2Facrefore%2F9780190846626.001.0001%2Facrefore-9780190846626-e-369&data=05%7C02%7Cleo.bj%40uky.edu%7Cdb21f01cab8d40541a5708dc0168d3bc%7C2b30530b69b64457b818481cb53d42ae%7C0%7C0%7C638386797092209227%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C2000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=DM6pdkeTVS17ivWAlSJ7Ofnp0%2FuK32TfJcrYPY6h%2BCQ%3D&reserved=0). In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*. Last modified 2023, December 13. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.369>

Benjamin James A. Leo. Review of Treistman, Jeffrey, When Bad States Win: Rethinking Counterinsurgency Strategy. H-War, H-Net Reviews. December 2023.

Leo, B. & Blair, M. (2025). Post-Coup Instability: Regional Autocracies and International Influence in the Sahel. In Hendrickson & McKendry-Smith (Eds.), *Post-Conflict Resolutions and Representations*. Critical, Cultural and Communications Press (London).

**Additional Training**

2023 ICPSR Summer Program

University of Kentucky Graduate Certificate in College Teaching & Learning. (Anticipated Completion: Spring 2024)

**Service**

Peer Reviewer, International Interactions (Fall 2025)

President, Political Science Graduate Students (Fall 2023-Spring 2025)

Graduate Student Peer Mentor (Fall 23 - )

Head Teaching Assistant (Fall 2024 – Spring 2025)

Panelist, Experienced TA Panel (Fall 2024)

TA Orientation Leader (Fall 2024)